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Athletes' Perceptions of Ankle Support

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Objective: The purpose of this study was to determine how NCAA division 2 athletes perceive ankle sprain preventative measures.

Methods: In this study there were 11 participants who answered a questionnaire about the preventative measure they received. In order for an athlete to participate in this study, they had to have missed one day of practice or one game, used either an ankle brace or ankle tape, sprained their ankle in the most recent competitive season, and had to attend an NCAA Division 2 college. The survey was then distributed to the athletes on qualtrics. After the questionnaires were filled out the data was analyzed by a chi square test.

Results: There were no statistical significant differences between the sports, comfort level, previous injuries, and what kind of tape or brace they used. On a ten point scale, the range of comfort levels varied from one to nine. The average of the score was a six. Despite the average scores, most athletes reported that they would use the same preventative measure, and seven responded that their ankle felt stable. Overall the athletes seemed to like the preventative measures received enough to wear them again, however most athletes reported the

tape or brace to be uncomfortable, and negatively affect their performance.

Statistical Analysis: A chi square test was used to analyses the data. There were no statistical significant differences between the sport and their comfort level, previous injuries, and what kind of tape or brace they used.

Discussion: Five of the nine responses indicated that their performance was hindered due to the tape or brace. Finding a way to make them more comfortable and less restricting should be considered. Communication is crucial to help with this and to make sure the athletes are provided with enough support. A few limitations to this research is the population sample, and that comfort is very subjective and cannot easily be analyzed, because athletes have different opinions and definitions of comfort.

Conclusion: The average of the athletes' comfort was a six for tape, brace, and a combination of both. Overall the athletes seemed to like the preventative measures received enough to wear them again, however most athletes reported the tape or brace to be uncomfortable, or negatively affect their performance.

Key Words: *ankle support and ankle sprain*